

McCall, Brandon

From: Eric Polinsky <epolinsky@carabetta.com>
Sent: Monday, March 03, 2014 4:25 PM
To: HSGTestimony
Cc: Joseph Carabetta; Sam Carabetta; Joe Carabetta Jr
Subject: H.B. 5438, Housing Committee Public Hearing, March 4, 2014

Housing Committee Public Hearing, March 4, 2014
The Rights & Responsibilities Of Landlords And Tenants Regarding Bed
Bug Infestation

Testimony of Eric M. Polinsky
Asst. Development Manager, The Carabetta Companies, 200 Pratt Street,
Meriden, CT
on behalf of The Carabetta Companies

Conditional support of H.B. 5438 with the changes requested below

Honorable members of the Housing Committee, I appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony on the referenced bill. The Carabetta Companies own and manage close to 10,400 apartments, mostly affordable, and manage Connecticut's largest Low Income Housing Tax Credit portfolio. We have noted that the number of incidents involving Bedbugs has dropped recently due in large part to our tenant outreach and overall education on this serious subject.

At Carabetta we remain concerned that the procedures to remedy an infestation need improvement in our State and we are requesting you modify raised Bill 5438 as follows:

1. The 60 day disclosure requirement needs to apply to both owners and tenants. An owner (and by extension their manager) needs to consider the risks of leasing a unit to a tenant coming from an infested apartment. If a tenant is coming from an infested unit, the owner may reject the tenant's application on this ground and a failure to disclose

from a tenant will be subject to the same penalties as an owner's failure to disclose under section 1 (one);

2. Delete all language curtailing an owner's right to a "*Lapse Of Time*" eviction;
3. An owner **must** maintain the right to treat the unit themselves. Bed Bugs may be successfully treated by non-toxic methods such as steam cleaning and diatomaceous earth. Requiring licensed exterminators is costly and not necessarily more effective. Even licensed and professionally-trained applicators often require two or more treatments;
4. An owner **needs access to treat an infestation quickly**. We suggest an owner be allowed to enter **with or without a tenant's consent 48 hours** after supplying written notice by posting of such notice on the unit door, by sliding it under the door, or both;
5. Limit a condominium owner's liability concerning treatment and inspections to adjoining and adjacent units, or delete this entire section.

Sincerest thanks for your consideration,



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